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## Nigeria: Jonathan to Flag Off N131 Billion Abuja-Kaduna Rail Project

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Abuja — Abuja to Kaduna rail modernisation project is to cost the Federal Government \$874,308,704 (N131 billion) and would be executed by the China Civil and Engineering Construction Company (CCECC).

Ministry of Transport in a statement on Tuesday in Abuja by Kingsley Agha, Deputy Director (Press and Public Relations), said the project would be flagged off by President Goodluck Jonathan on Thursday.

He added that the Abuja-Kaduna standard gauge (single track) railway modernisation programme is in pursuance of the determination of government to implement an efficient transport system in the country.

"This contract which will be undertaken by the China Civil and Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) is to cost US\$874,308,704 (including consultants' fees).

"In order to see to the execution of the project, the Nigeria government in December last year secured a concessionary loan of \$500 million from the Chinese government at less than 3 per cent interest rate, repayable in 15 years".

It would be recalled that former President Olusegun Obasanjo had awarded the contract for construction of the Lagos-Kano standard gauge rail system to the same CCECC in 2006 at a cost of \$8.3b.

The contract could, however, not be executed because of funding problems.

The project has now been re-scoped to six stand-alone segments, starting with Abuja-Kaduna line and to be simultaneously followed by the Lagos-Ibadan route.

The project is expected to be completed in three years.

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